

Message Text

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ACTION EA-09

INFO OCT-01 ISO-00 CIAE-00 DODE-00 PM-04 H-01 INR-07 L-03

NSAE-00 NSC-05 PA-01 PRS-01 SP-02 SS-15 USIA-06 SAJ-01

OMB-01 /057 W

-----131117Z 028319 /20

R 131045Z JAN 77

FM AMEMBASSY TAIPEI

TO SECSTATE WASHDC 2244

INFO AMEMBASSY TOKYO

AMCONSUL HONG KONG

USLO PEKING

C O N F I D E N T I A L TAIPEI 231

E.O. 11652: GDS

TAGS: PFOR, CH, TW, US

SUBJECT: US CHINA POLICY AND SECRETARY-DESIGNATE VANCE'S

REMARKS TO SENATE FOREIGN RELATIONS COMMITTEE

1. INTRODUCTION AND SUMMARY: US PROSPECTIVE CHINA POLICY UNDER THE CARTER ADMINISTRATION CONTINUES TO BE GIVEN PROMINENT PUBLICITY IN THE MEDIA, WITH ROC AMBASSADOR SHEN (WHO RECENTLY VISITED TAIPEI FROM THE US ON CONSULTATIONS) PROVIDING AN OPTIMISTIC COUNTERPOINT TO SECRETARY-DESIGNATE VANCE'S REMARKS ON US CHINA POLICY. VANCE'S TESTIMONY AT SENATE FOREIGN RELATIONS COMMITTEE RECEIVED WIDE PUBLICITY HERE, (INCLUDING REFERENCES TO NORMALIZATION, SHANGHAI COMMUNIQUE) WITH VANCE QUOTED AS SAYING THAT "THE US WILL STAND BY ITS COMMITMENT TO DEFEND THE ROC". END SUMMARY.

2. DURING HIS RECENT VISIT TO TAIWAN ROC AMBASSADOR TO THE US SHEN CHIEN-HUNG EXPRESSED OPTIMISM OVER THE DIRECTION OF US CHINA POLICY, STATING IN A SPEECH TO A MEETING OF THE LEGISLATIVE YUAN'S FOREIGN RELATIONS AND OVERSEAS CHINESE AFFAIRS COMMITTEES THAT RELATIONS BETWEEN THE US AND THE ROC WILL BECOME CLOSER. HE ALSO CLAIMED
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THAT MOST AMERICAN OFFICIALS AND PEOPLE SUPPORT THE ROC AND ARE OPPOSED TO NORMALIZING RELATIONS WITH PEKING AT THE EXPENSE OF THE ROC.

3. UNDAUNTED BY VANCE'S MEETING WITH PRCLO AMBASSADOR HUANG CHEN, SHEN REPEATED HIS COMMENTS TO THE PRESS UPON HIS DEPARTURE FOR WASHINGTON. THE LOCAL PRESS ALSO NOTED

THAT SHEN WOULD ATTEND PRESIDENT-ELECT CARTER'S INAUGURATION AND "WAS EXPECTED" TO MEET WITH SECRETARY KISSINGER AND POSSIBLY HIS SUCCESSOR BEFORE JANUARY 20.

4. SECRETARY-DESIGNATE VANCE'S REMARKS ON US CHINA POLICY IN HEARINGS BEFORE THE SENATE FOREIGN RELATIONS COMMITTEE WERE ALSO WIDELY CARRIED BY THE LOCAL PRESS. PRESS CORRECTLY QUOTED VANCE'S STATEMENTS ON NORMALIZATION, THE GUIDING PRINCIPLES AS SET FORTH IN THE SHANGHAI COMMUNIQUE, AND TAKING INTO CONSIDERATION THE SECURITY OF THE PEOPLE OF TAIWAN. HOWEVER, SOME CHINESE AND ENGLISH-LANGUAGE NEWSPAPERS ALSO QUOTED VANCE AS SAYING THAT "THE US WILL STAND BY ITS COMMITMENT TO DEFEND THE ROC ON TAIWAN."

5. COMMENT: WE ARE UNABLE TO FIND THE ABOVE QUOTATION IN THE TEXT OF VANCE'S TESTIMONY AS CARRIED IN THE WIRELESS FILE AND THEREFORE QUESTION ITS AUTHENTICITY. REGARDLESS OF ITS AUTHENTICITY, ITS APPEARANCE IN MAJOR CHINESE-LANGUAGE NEWSPAPERS AND IN ENGLISH-LANGUAGE CHINA NEWS BANNER HEADLINE IS LIKELY TO CAUSE MOST PEOPLE ON THE ISLAND TO BELIEVE THAT VANCE DID MAKE A COMMITMENT TO THE DEFENSE OF TAIWAN. HOWEVER, WE WOULD EXPECT THOSE WHO ARE ATTUNED TO LOCAL NEWSPAPER DISTORTIONS AND TO THE GENERAL DIRECTION OF US CHINA POLICY TO TAKE A MORE CAUTIOUS VIEW OF THE QUOTATION AND ITS SIGNIFICANCE.

6. REQUEST DEPARTMENT ASCERTAIN WHETHER ABOVE QUOTATION ATTRIBUTED TO VANCE IS ACCURATE.
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Message Attributes

Automatic Decaptioning: X
Capture Date: 01-Jan-1994 12:00:00 am
Channel Indicators: n/a
Current Classification: UNCLASSIFIED
Concepts: FOREIGN POLICY POSITION
Control Number: n/a
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Decaption Date: 01-Jan-1960 12:00:00 am
Decaption Note:
Disposition Action: RELEASED
Disposition Approved on Date:
Disposition Case Number: n/a
Disposition Comment: 25 YEAR REVIEW
Disposition Date: 22 May 2009
Disposition Event:
Disposition History: n/a
Disposition Reason:
Disposition Remarks:
Document Number: 1977TAIPEI00231
Document Source: CORE
Document Unique ID: 00
Drafter: n/a
Enclosure: n/a
Executive Order: GS
Errors: N/A
Expiration:
Film Number: D770013-0198
Format: TEL
From: TAIPEI
Handling Restrictions: n/a
Image Path:
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Legacy Key: link1977/newtext/t19770153/aaaabusf.tel
Line Count: 98
Litigation Code IDs:
Litigation Codes:
Litigation History:
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Office: ACTION EA
Original Classification: CONFIDENTIAL
Original Handling Restrictions: n/a
Original Previous Classification: n/a
Original Previous Handling Restrictions: n/a
Page Count: 2
Previous Channel Indicators: n/a
Previous Classification: CONFIDENTIAL
Previous Handling Restrictions: n/a
Reference: n/a
Retention: 0
Review Action: RELEASED, APPROVED
Review Content Flags:
Review Date: 30-Dec-2004 12:00:00 am
Review Event:
Review Exemptions: n/a
Review Media Identifier:
Review Release Date: n/a
Review Release Event: n/a
Review Transfer Date:
Review Withdrawn Fields: n/a
SAS ID: 3602772
Secure: OPEN
Status: NATIVE
Subject: US CHINA POLICY AND SECRETARY-DESIGNATE VANCE'S REMARKS TO SENATE FOREIGN RELATIONS COMMITTEE
TAGS: PFOR, CH, TW, US, (VANCE, CYRUS R), (CARTER, JIMMY)
To: STATE
Type: TE
vdkgvwkey: odhc://SAS/SAS.dbo.SAS_Docs/8b0205da-c288-dd11-92da-001cc4696bcc
Review Markings:
Margaret P. Grafeld
Declassified/Released
US Department of State
EO Systematic Review
22 May 2009
Markings: Margaret P. Grafeld Declassified/Released US Department of State EO Systematic Review 22 May 2009